

Another insight into the noble character that was Ab Murdock's as well as further proof that he was a loving, compassionate person is revealed in a letter written from prison in August, 1896 to his sister, Margaret Murray upon the death of her 3 year old son, Quince. Ab wrote of how he was saddened at the news and then enclosed the following poem.

*"Mourn not for dear little Quince
Nor to despair be driven,
Your child is saved through Jesus Christ
He now has gone to Heaven.
Tis true the trial was hard
That took him from your breast,
But proud his name, your bosom swell
For he has gone to rest.
While lying suffering on your knee,
Your heart was like to break,
And oft you sighed and wept and said
O, could my child but speak.
But think you are bereaved,
Sister hark!, Thy God is good
Sister, your child is saved.
Shed not for him the bitter tear
Nor yield to sad regret,
Tis but the casket that lies there
Sister, thy child is living yet!"²*

At about that same time Joseph took in a most distinguished guest. Professor Nathaniel Baldwin had been on that staff of Brigham Young Academy, but he came to the quiet of Heber Valley to research what was then considered to be only a crazy dream. He had an idea that he could transmit voices through the air by something called radio waves. It wasn't long until people around Heber Valley began calling him "Crazy Nate". John H. got Baldwin a job as a

2. Letter of Alma (Ab) Murdock, Utah Territorial Prison, dated August, 1896.

compressor operator at the Steamboat Mine in Snake Creek Canyon where he had plenty of quiet and time to conduct his experiments.

One day Baldwin asked John H. to fine him an old phonograph so that he could make a sound that could be heard all around the world. John H. took him a broken phonograph and Baldwin asked him if he could raise \$500 to help him, but it was taking every cent the Murdocks had to continue legal appeals for Ab, and besides, John H. asked, "What good is a sound that could be heard all around the world?" Baldwin continued his experiments and a few years later demonstrated his new invention by sending recorded music from Salt Lake City to Provo. Today all radio and television sets have speakers based on patents issued to Nathaniel "Crazy Nate" Baldwin. George Olson of Heber City later recalled that he could have purchased stock in Baldwin's company for very little, but didn't do so. Later the same stock he had been offered was valued at \$600,000!³

On April 14th, 1898 Joseph's wife Eliza died at Heber City at the age of 68. It was Eliza who had sold eggs at Joseph Smith's home at Nauvoo for 3¢ a dozen, and later had borne Joseph's first child. She had suffered the countless hard times of pioneer life in adobe cabins and slab shacks hardly secure enough to keep the wolves out. Her loss was difficult for Joseph, being his third wife to die. At her death Joseph told several of his granddaughters, "Girls, I wish you would grow up to be like your grandmother."⁴ There could be no more fitting tribute to Eliza than that simple statement. Now only his wives Jane and Elizabeth remained, and both would outlive him by a very long time, for Joseph's time was now short.

It seemed that Joseph's long fight to free Ab from prison was about to bear fruit. He had spent every cent he could raise and had worked tirelessly for seven years. Finally his attorneys assured him that Ab would soon be free. Governor Spry had agreed to sign a pardon and it would be only a few more weeks until Ab would be home. It was January and one of the coldest winters that Joseph could remember. Although it was bitterly cold, he worked hard getting everything ready for Ab's homecoming. It kept him busy chopping wood and doing other chores, for he still had two homes to take care of. Friends noticed that he seemed to have aged, and he often complained of being cold. He

3. Interview with George Olson, February 4th, 1972, Heber City, Utah.

4. How Beautiful Upon The Mountains, Pg. 436, DUP, 1963.